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THE ADVENTURES OF BROWN SUGAR, ADVENTURES IN CREATIVE WRITING.

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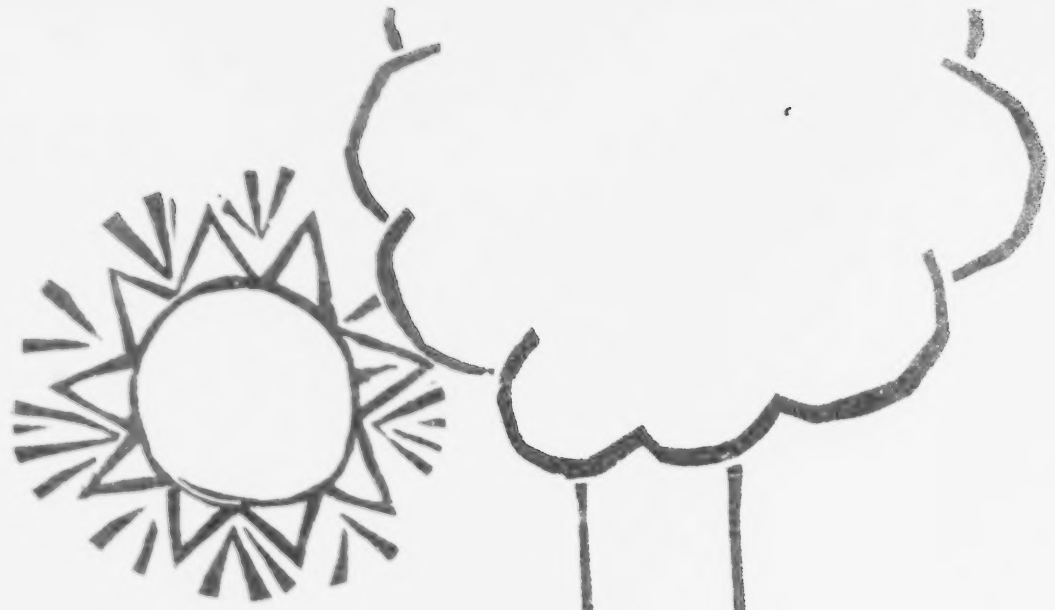

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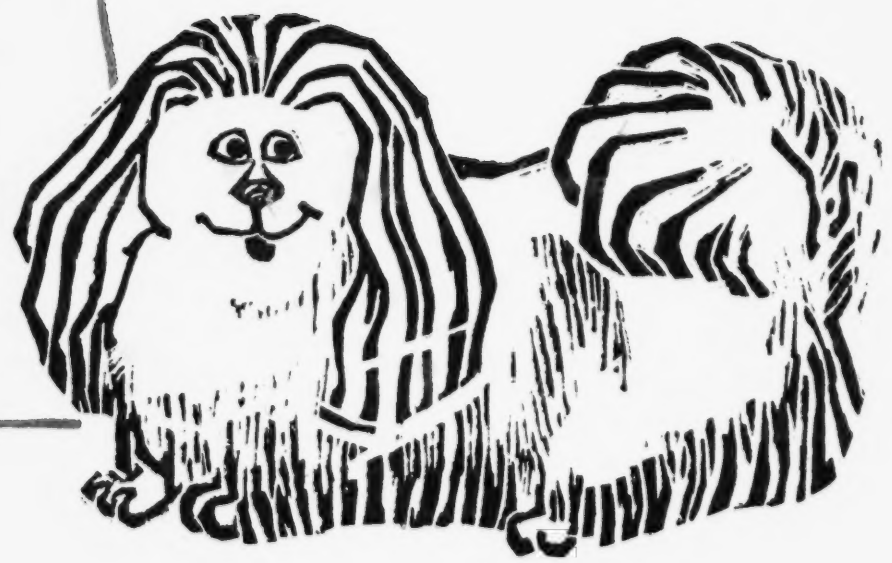

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The Adventures of BROWN SUGAR

Adventures in Creative Writing

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To
Saralyn Daly

Who was both Aaron and Hur when our hands grew unsteady with the task we had set before us.

Exodus 17:11-12

Foreword

Undoubtedly most successful writers and teachers of writing have at times been asked a variety of questions about writing as they do it, or writing as they teach it. From what responses we get we have come to know a good deal about the techniques and methods of teachers who are successful in developing *individuals* who write well, for the individuals themselves and their writing speak well of the efforts expended by all involved. Seldom do we find accounts of teachers who achieve success in teaching *groups* of children how to write. Mrs. Carrie V. Stegall is one teacher who has taught groups and she tells us how she does her work.

Mrs. Stegall in her *The Adventures of Brown Sugar: Adventures in Creative Writing* carries us step by step through the stages of the group development of a story in which *all forty* of her fourth grade pupils participate actively over a sixteen-week period. This involvement in the group project leads to the situation where at the beginning of the second semester, each child expresses an anxious desire to write his own story. *And,* following the group experience, each of the forty has his own folder, his own outline, his own writing rules, and his own book in the process of being written.

It has been observed (Goodenough and Prelinger, *Children Tell Stories,* International Universities Press, 1963) that teachers are well aware that creative writing is dependent on an individual's accumulation of sensory

experiences that are registered in the mind and remain there until they are stimulated and recalled. These experiences are of the utmost importance to creative writing, for without them children have nothing to write about. This raw material helps to make up what has been referred to as "internal wealth." This internal wealth of experiences and impressions undergoes a good deal of reshuffling, rearranging, and recombining as a result of environmental factors, and not the least of these are the pressures of the classroom with demands made for "good" or "correct" English. Such pressures result in an amazing variety of thoughts and feelings as revealed in children's stories. We see this in such compilations as *Small Voices* (*Small Voices,* Josef and Dorothy Berger, Paul S. Eriksson, 1966), wherein the stresses of school life and school living are supplanted by the influences of home and family life, or in extreme situations, in prison or concentration camp existence (*I Never Saw Another Butterfly,* McGraw-Hill, 1964).

But what of the positive influences of school—those which forward the writing process rather than get in its way? Mrs. Stegall spends a good deal of time in preliminary or preparatory work, in the so-called initiating activities of the writing process. A like concern for other facets of the task persists throughout the duration of the activity, for she says, "Throughout the story there were the weaknesses which I could have avoided had I been more interested in the finished product than in the children who wrote it. Twelve or fifteen children alone could have done a remarkable job once they were well launched on the

project. However, I chose to use greatly improved work of *all* the children, not just a few. This procedure kept the weaker pupils working as it inspired the better ones to exceed their own efforts."

Readers of *The Adventures of Brown Sugar* are glad for this choice, for the best testament as to the worth of the book may well come from the child writers themselves who say: "We are writing this book because we don't want to do English. Sentences are hard to do. I think writing a book is more fun than writing sentences. Writing a story is funny and English is not funny. We will not have to work in our book and write old silly sentences. We would not have learned about a Pekingese if we worked in an English book. Some of us might want to write a book when we grow up and we'll know how!"

Walter J. Moore, Chairman
Elementary Section, NCTE

Preface

When youngsters accomplish a worthy goal, there are people who think they accomplished it because they were "special children."

On a whole this class was not one of exceptional ability. Almost half of them rated below fourth grade reading level when school began. Few could write half a dozen related sentences. At first I had to rewrite some of the children's paragraphs with the aid of their "oral translations," because they could not spell well enough for me even to guess what they meant. Frequently, I had to "drag" ideas from them individually in order to include those ideas in the story. I did this, of course, to bolster their interest and ego and to keep them trying, and I believe they enjoyed trying.

My thanks are to all these children who so relentlessly cracked their whips of enthusiasm over my sometimes reluctant head. Never, of course, did they realize that I labored over thirty-five or forty papers each time they blithely dashed through one—not just once a day but sometimes twice or even three times. There were times that I envied teachers who complained of such papers once a week!

Special acknowledgement should also go to Mrs. Margie Miller and Mrs. Erma Barton who launched these youngsters on their illustrations and again to Mrs. Barton who helped them compose the music to their poem.

Certainly, I am indebted to Dr. Madge Davis and her methods class of Midwestern University who followed our progress with gratifying enthusiasm. Their visits were encouraging.

To Dr. Saralyn Daly, my former professor, now of Los Angeles State College, I owe much for the courage to experiment with language in the elementary grades.

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Introduction

When school began in September, I searched diligently among my fourth graders for a spark, even a tiny spark, of interest in writing, or, as they chose to call it, the study of English. But not even the tiniest spark did I find. Copying "old silly sentences" from a textbook and filling in blanks with those same "old silly sentences" was the sum total of English, and significantly "that didn't learn anybody anything or do anybody any good."

That view was unfortunate, I told the youngsters, because every class was required to have an English period. What could we do? Some ventured to suggest that we could leave it off and not tell anybody about it. I secretly contemplated the wisdom of that suggestion and was sorely tempted.

Instead, I cautiously asked, "Had you rather write a book than study English?" I was overwhelmed with the spontaneous enthusiasm that swept through the classroom.

"Sure!"

"Yeah, let's do."

"You bet!"

"Oh, boy! Can we?"

"That would be fun!"

As cries of approval spread throughout the class, indifference and boredom disappeared. And there was I, the teacher, without the vaguest idea of how to

begin to write a book, much less to teach thirty-six youngsters how to do so. Nevertheless, believing that a teacher sometimes does her best job simply by staying out of the way of her pupils, I plunged into this wave of enthusiasm and found myself engulfed in one of the most delightful teaching-learning-writing experiences of my twenty-five years of teaching.

Not only did the boys and girls want to write a book, they wanted to write it right then and there. But, of course, a few preliminaries had to be pigeonholed before the fun began.

First, we discussed books we had read or had heard read. The discussion was eventually directed to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,* with which the youngsters were quite familiar since they remembered seeing another class dramatize scenes from it a year or so before. Briefly I told how Mark Twain took a number of boys whom he knew well, rolled them all up into one, and thus created the book character Tom Sawyer. This was possible and easy to do simply because Mark Twain knew boys well. And, since he also knew life on the Mississippi River because he had lived there, he could write vividly about it.

Second, I opened a discussion about things with which we, as fourth graders, were most familiar. Dogs, cats, and other pets came into our group conversation with dogs holding priority. Though we planned to follow Mark Twain's lead and "roll all of our dogs up into one" to get our main character, we were forced to choose *one* dog as the physical evidence needed for a tangible beginning. Since my own pet was a little brown Pekingese, I asked if the children would like to

play with him while they were deciding. Certainly the suggestion met with enthusiastic approval. Therefore, the following day Brown Sugar, also known as Boy, went to school. It was difficult to tell which enjoyed the get-acquainted party more—Brown Sugar or the children. At any rate the meeting resulted in mutual love at first sight. So came our title: *The Adventures of Brown Sugar.*

Thus armed with a dog, a title for their book, and boundless optimism, these fourth graders were launched upon their high adventure, the two chief purposes of which were "to get out of studying English" and to have a surprise for their parents at Christmas. (In more scholarly circles the psychologists, I believe, call it "motivation.")

Then came discussions, many periods of them scattered throughout the following days, about the beginning of a book. Just how did one go about such a project? Well, for one thing, the children knew that many books were divided into chapters because they were reading such books. Surely that was as good a way as any to start. All agreed. But then what?

Here I ventured to ask a question, "What would your mothers do if they were to begin to make a dress or a shirt?" Why, they would use a pattern, the pieces of which would join perfectly if the article of clothing fit well. Thereafter continued discussions about finishing the sewing a little bit at a time and then fitting the pieces together properly. *Anybody* knew that much.

From lengthy and indefinite talk, I finally guided the youngsters into the idea of a Writing Pattern, one in which the pieces join smoothly and logically. The

Outline! Chapter I would naturally be "Introducing Brown Sugar." Six titles of paragraphs, which we felt were necessary to this first "piece of the garment," were suggested (in the order mentioned):

1. Why We Are Writing the Story
2. Describing Brown Sugar
3. How He Came to England
4. His Life in China
5. What He Does
6. With Whom He Lives[1]

These were later rearranged by a vote of the class into this order:

1. Describing Brown Sugar
2. With Whom He Lives
3. His Life in China
4. How He Came to England
5. Why We Are Writing the Story

The original number five was omitted in the final outline because that was to be the rest of the book.

Since I was avoiding anything that smacked of "writing old silly sentences," I made no effort to brief the youngsters on how to attack the writing of the first

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[1] I think, perhaps, that this construction was merely an echo of my speech because two or three children offered it, and it was *not* their usual form of expression. They acquired many of my speech habits with sponge-like facility.

paragraph. We merely discussed Boy's size, his shape, his color, his coat, his tail, his nose, his ears, his feet, and his legs. I wrote on the board all the words they thought they might like to use if they could only spell them. I suggested that they keep a list of the words so that they could refer to them again and again. (This list eventually grew into another book, *My Own English Book*,[2] which also includes rules made up as they were needed.)

When I read the first thirty-six paragraphs, I felt defeated. Ignoring all acceptable standards of sentence structure, however, I was able to find three usable sentences:

> Brown Sugar is a reddish brown white socked pint size Pekingese that has a little nose like a pumpkin. He is a small long haired dog that weighs about fourteen pounds. He is bow legged and his tail curls up over his back as if he had a Toni in it.

Those were the exact words in all their barbaric beauty, from three different papers. The owners copied them correctly according to my instructions, relying confidently on their teacher for proper guidance in book writing. Capital letters, correct spelling, and proper usage of periods they accepted because they had "heard about them" in the third grade.

Then I combined the three sentences, read them aloud, and asked for criticism. Receiving no reaction at all, I assumed that they were simply too good to

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[2]This book begins on page 57.

criticize. But, as there still didn't seem to be enough description of Boy, I instructed all except the three to try again, and one produced the following line: "He has a silky back of long hair, and his ears hang down to his feet."

That was it! When this last sentence was added to the first three, paragraph one was complete. We had passed the first hurdle. Paragraph two was as laboriously developed but as victoriously achieved. Paragraph three was prefaced by days of reading from reference books to get some exciting information about the Pekingese dog. Mark Twain had used ideas gleaned from his reading. Why shouldn't we? Paragraph four was developed in like manner. Paragraph five was simply the outpouring of feelings about this business of writing. In order to get a cross section of reasons for their entering so enthusiastically into the writing project, I developed this last paragraph simply by choosing its seven sentences from seven different papers.

Thus Chapter I, fulfilling its purpose, was finally completed at the end of the first six weeks grade period. In the eyes of its authors it was perfect; in the eyes of the teacher it was finished. I wondered whether that accomplishment was worth the endless hours of paper checking, personal conferences, and constant class discussions which had been necessary to the writing of each paragraph. However, when I hopefully suggested that this short chapter was not worth the long laborious hours they had spent in writing it, the youngsters reacted loudly and negatively. To them it was such an unquestioned masterpiece that tiresome details which had accompanied its progress were completely nil in

retrospect. Realizing then that I was trapped, I bowed to the will of my slave drivers and wrote "Chapter II" on the blackboard. What would we call it?

Discussion followed discussion until all agreed on the chapter title as well as on the paragraph titles within it. I was amazed and gratified at the speed and ease with which this chapter developed. Instead of having to *search* for sentences to combine for a paragraph, I found myself weighing the merits of *one entire paragraph* against those of another. Merely by constantly recalling information learned in the third grade, about half of the youngsters had mastered the art of writing correct sentences. They remembered that (1) a sentence should say something, (2) it should start with a capital letter, and (3) it should end with a period, a question mark, or an exciting mark.

By discussing sentences as we read orally from our readers, we discovered that real authors always wrote *interesting* sentences, too. That point in itself was the real difference between the sentences we liked and those we did not like. We liked those that were parts of interesting reading or writing, but we still did not like those "old silly sentences" that we copied out of our English book for no other purpose than to fill blanks. Having arrived at this conclusion about sentence writing, we decided to watch all our reading for suggestions for improving our writing. We might accidentally learn more about *how* the experts managed to write so well.

In Chapter II the first rules actually evolved by this simple process of checking the work of the masters. Until now, all punctuation marks except

periods which had been used correctly were, so far as I knew, completely accidental. Since the project was a secret from the families, I felt reasonably sure that parents had not assisted any of the boys and girls in their efforts. In checking papers, I systematically left all correct punctuation alone and marked off all that was used incorrectly.

When the problem of the apostrophe arose, we turned to the experts. How did successful writers handle the situation? Examination of reading materials revealed the secret. The following is a minute account of how the children were led to use their reading to develop the rules that are found in their own personal English books:

I asked the class in which direction the sun rose that morning.
"In the east, of course."
"Where will it rise in the morning?"
"In the east, of course," they answered in superior voices.
"How do you *know?*"
"Well, won't it?"
"Yes, but why?"
"We don't know. Do you?"

"It has been rising in the east every morning of my life, a great many mornings indeed, and I assume it is a rule."

"Why, sure," they chorused.

"Then may I likewise assume if an expert uses the same thing over and over in his writing that it is all right for us to do so?" I asked.

"Why, sure," one answered.

"Of course," another said.

"Then let me suggest something. As you read, if you see something in your reading often enough for you to make a rule about it, make the rule and present it to the class for consideration. If you can make a rule and *prove* the rule by ten examples, we shall accept it for our English books."[3]

"Oh, good!" shouted several.

"That'll be fun," said others.

In this manner was laid the framework for rules, and thereafter all traditional textbook rules were left moulding on their dusty textbook pages along with "old silly sentences" and their useless blanks.

Certainly the superior pupils were the ones who pushed the treasure hunt for rules and examples. But when a rule was made, proved, and accepted, the less aggressive pupils often gained recognition by further "strengthening" the rule with other examples.

To return to the specific case of the apostrophe: Almost all the children used an apostrophe with every word ending in *s*. Apparently this was a carryover from the third grade. Finally, a child discovered that an apostrophe was used to

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[3] The word *rule* here is, of course, used in the sense that it is the cumulative result of usage, not the prescriptive dogma of the rule book.

show ownership. This he proved by showing ten uses found in a book he was reading. The class decided that that settled the apostrophe question.

Without a word, I wrote on the board these words: *don't, can't, isn't, haven't, I'll,* and many others. Instantly several understood that they had jumped to a conclusion. Some had even used *that* apostrophe in their own writing. Thus it became necessary to search for another apostrophe rule. This proved no task at all, as several children clamored for the privilege of making the rule. "To make two words into one, we use an apostrophe to show for the missing letter or letters."

In like manner all rules applied in the writing of this book were evolved, proved, and accepted. These rules the reader may examine in *My Own English Book.*

The reader must understand that this entire story was written paragraph by paragraph. Much class discussion was devoted to the problem of sewing the paragraphs together neatly and smoothly. Though each chapter was outlined completely before the actual writing began, the children were ever conscious of the fact that each succeeding paragraph should flow logically out of the preceding one.[4] Frequently there was concrete evidence that the children quite understood this phase of writing bridges or transitions.

One day we were beginning a new paragraph. Either we had failed to

---

[4] Footnote 3, page 8, explains how diligently we worked on the problem of coherence.

mention how the preceding one had ended, or one of the boys had failed to listen during the discussion of it. At any rate, Billy did not know how the chosen writing of the day before had ended. Therefore, after a few minutes of trying to begin his work, he said, "Mrs. Stegall, what kind of thread did we finish with yesterday?" When I read the closing sentence, he sighed contentedly and tackled his new paragraph immediately. When I checked the papers, his writing fit perfectly.

Throughout the story there were weaknesses which I could have avoided had I been more interested in the finished product than in the children who wrote it. Twelve or fifteen children alone could have done a remarkable job once they were well launched on the project. However, I chose to use greatly improved work of *all* the children, not just a few. This procedure kept the weaker pupils working as it inspired the better ones to exceed their own efforts.

Also, though the class studiously followed the accepted outline, I often violated the form of a chapter by including in the story more than one paragraph written on the same subject. This was to reward those pupils who had done exceptionally well in writing on that particular topic. Sometimes two pieces of writing were combined as one. Sometimes they were entered in the book as separate paragraphs entirely.

Sixteen weeks after beginning this writing project, the children finished the book—six beautiful, informative, victorious chapters! In typed form it was magnificent! The crowning event was on the day of the Christmas party when I

read this "great American novel" to the mothers. Each child was fully repaid for all the hours of writing by the appreciation voiced by his mother.

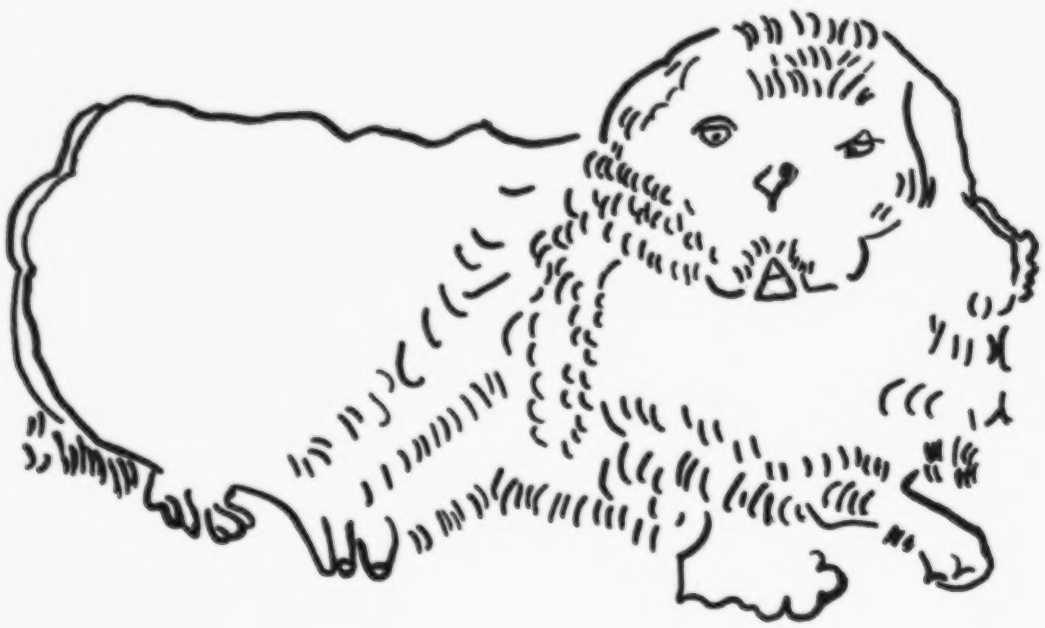
Not the least of the benefits derived from this project was the fact that *each child* in the class expressed the anxious desire to write his own—his very own—story during the second semester. Consequently at the beginning of the second semester forty purposeful fourth graders had their own folders, their own outlines, their own writing rules, and their own books in the process of being written.[5] Another surprising and wholly gratifying aspect of this second project was that each child was progressing at his own rate of speed, was writing exactly what *he* wanted to write about, and was applying all the rules written in his own personal English textbook. Not once had the children copied "old silly sentences" and filled blanks. In fact, we had all had a marvelous time *not* studying English that year!

[5] The first chapter of one of these individual books appears on page 83.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER I[1]

1.	Why We Are Writing the Story	6
3.	Describing Brown Sugar	1
3.	How He Came to England	4
4.	His Life in China	3
5.	What He Does	(Omitted)
6.	Whom He Lives With	2

[1]As we planned this first chapter, these six paragraph topics were suggested by the class, and I wrote them on the board in the order they were suggested. After we felt sure that this was *all* we wanted in the first chapter, we discussed at length the order in which we would write the paragraphs. The children themselves decided in the order numbered at the right. I like to think that this experience showed them that they did not *have* to write ideas in the order in which they first "popped" into their minds but that rearranging ideas helps to put them in natural and reasonable sequence.



BROWN SUGAR

THE ADVENTURES OF BROWN SUGAR

Chapter I
Introducing Brown Sugar

Brown Sugar is a reddish brown white socked pint size Pekingese that has a little nose like a pumpkin. He is a small long haired dog that weighs about fourteen pounds. He is bowlegged and his tail curls up over his back as if he had a Toni in it. He has a silky back of long hair, and his ears hang down to his feet.

Brown Sugar lives with Mr. and Mrs. Brown and Nancy now. Nancy once had a kitten and his name was Sugar because he was white and looked like sugar. Nancy loved Sugar very much. When Sugar died Nancy was very sad. The next day they went to see some of their relatives[1] and they gave her a little dog. Nancy wanted to call him Sugar but he was brown. The dog was sweet but unrefined so she named him Brown Sugar and that is how he got his name.[2]

Mr. and Mrs. Brown live across from the school so their daughter Nancy can

---

[1] Two children wrote almost identical sentences using the word *ancestors* here. In the class discussion of Brown Sugar's forebears, we used the word *ancestors* frequently.

[2] Thinking that the family joke about naming the puppy might appeal to some of the children, I told the class that he "was sweet but unrefined." I then had to explain that *unrefined* meant *ill-mannered*. When the boys and girls heard the noise Boy made drinking, they understood and appreciated the joke—that is, some did. One child, however, wrote, "They named him Brown Sugar because he is sweet but ill-mannered."

go to school faster. Mr. Brown works in a store. Mrs. Brown works as a school teacher. Nancy is in the seventh grade. Brown Sugar loves to live close to school because he can play with the children. They sometimes call him Boy.

The ancestors of Brown Sugar came from far across the ocean from the country of China. His great, great, great grandparents belonged to the ruler of China and lived in the royal castle. In China people used to pray to Pekingese dogs. Only people of royal birth could own them. The Chinese made this dog bowlegged so that he could not run away. Women those days wore Pekingese dogs in their sleeves. They called them sleeve dogs. The Pekingese is a toy in this country but is a respected watch dog in China.

In 1860 the English people took over the city of Peking. Two of these toy dogs were carried to England and that is how the whole world knew about the little dog.[3]

We are writing this book because we don't want to do English. Sentences are hard to do. I think writing a book is more fun than writing sentences. Writing a story is funny and English is not funny. We will not have to work in our book and write old silly sentences. We would not have learned about a Pekingese if we worked in an English book. Some of us might want to write a book when we grow up and we'll know how.

---

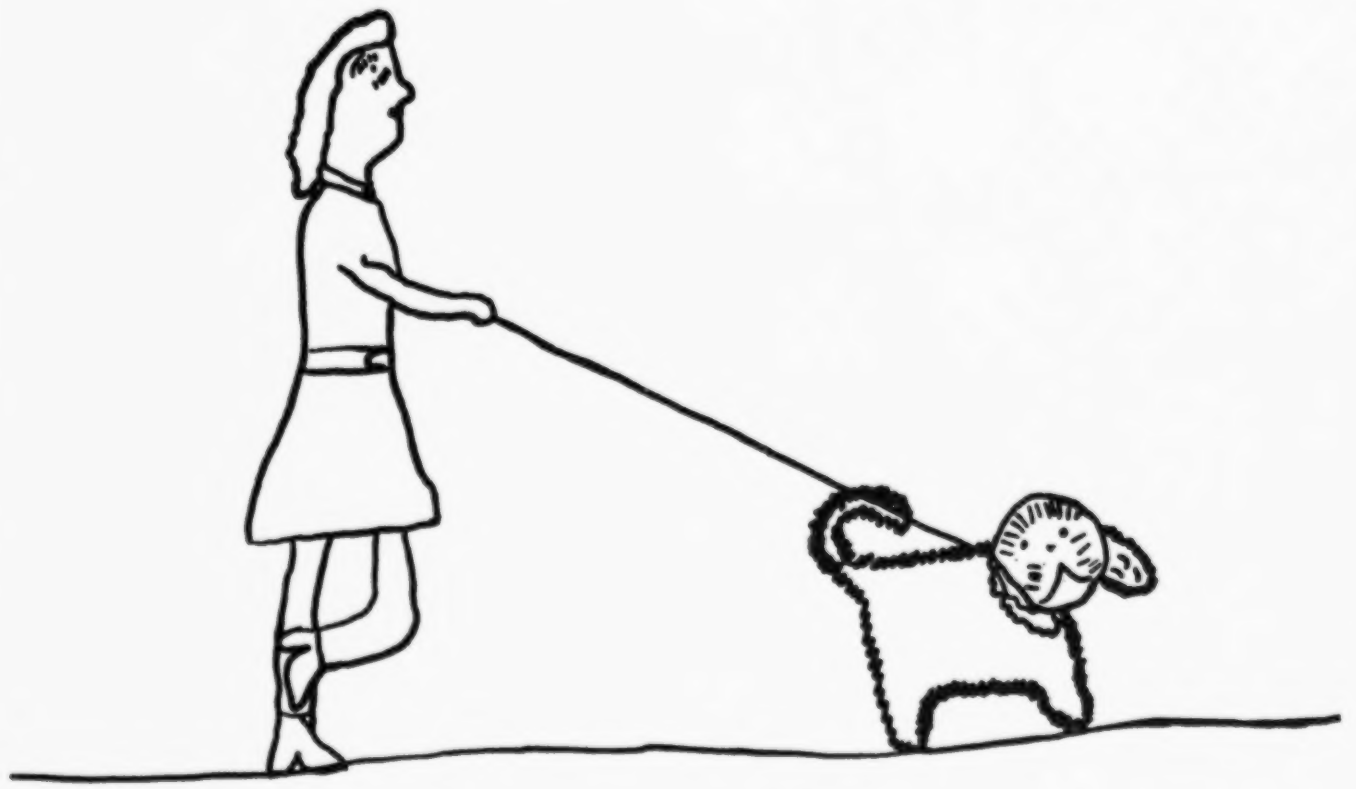
[3]All we could find in reference books about the Pekingese dog we read and discussed in class. Some of the information was hearsay, but it was interesting, and, since real authors don't always stick to facts, neither did we.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER II[1]

The Alarm Clock

1. Waking up Nancy
2. Waking up the Entire Family
3. Dinner Bell, Barking at Eating Time
4. Going Places, Getting in Car

[1]We followed the same general plan for writing the other five outlines as we did the first, but thereafter I merely copied for my records the order of the outline by which they wrote, not as they first suggested it.



BROWN SUGAR TAKES NANCY TO SCHOOL

Chapter II

The Alarm Clock

Brown Sugar sleeps in Nancy's doll buggy until Mrs. Brown turns the light out. Then he jumps in Nancy's bed and sleeps till Mrs. Brown gets up in the morning. Then he gets back in the buggy.[1] One morning Mrs. Brown called Nancy to get up but Nancy kept on sleeping. So about ten minutes later Mrs. Brown kept calling Nancy and Nancy just turned over and went back to sleep. At 7:20 Mrs. Brown called Nancy and told her she had better get up or she would be late for school, but Nancy kept on sleeping. So Mrs. Brown gave up. She let Brown Sugar back[2] in the bedroom and as soon as he saw Nancy in bed asleep he jumped up on her bed and pulled the cover off of her and Nancy pulled the cover back on her. But Brown Sugar did not give up trying to wake her up. He started barking around the bed and jumping upon it until she woke up. Brown Sugar is the alarm clock for Mrs. Brown to wake up Nancy on school mornings.

Brown Sugar not only wakes up Nancy but also wakes up the entire family in

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[1] This clever trick, and similar ones, were so often discussed and written with such glee at the conspiracy which exists between dogs and children against the "sanitary crusades" waged by adults in the various households that we had to include it even though the thread that sewed the different parts of the story together did not particularly harmonize here.

[2] They forgot to tell that he is turned outside the first thing each morning. I added this one word *back*.

case of an emergency.[3] One very pleasant night the Brown family's chicken house caught fire. Nancy had a setting hen in it. When Boy saw the fire he ran to drive the chickens out. When he saw the setting hen he jumped to the nest and got an egg between his teeth and put it in a nest outside. The hen was so mad that she followed him and found the nest of eggs and set[4] down. Very soon the eggs began to hatch. The next morning Nancy saw that the chicken house was burned down. She was very sad because she thought that the hen had been burned up, but just then she saw her hen and chicks and knew that Boy had saved her and her eggs—rather chicks and she was happy even if the chicken house had burned down. That's the way Boy became a fireman as well as an alarm clock for the whole family.

One night Brown Sugar stayed out late. The next morning Brown Sugar slept a long time. When he got up it was 12:00. Even Brown Sugar, the alarm clock, runs down sometimes.

One day the Browns got a letter from Nancy's grandparents saying they wanted them to come that night so that they would be there on Thanksgiving Day which was the next morning. That very night they packed a suitcase and

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[3]The class spent twenty minutes constructing this sentence on the board before they began the actual work on the paragraph. They were becoming more conscious *every day* of the need of sewing the paragraphs together to make them fit smoothly.

[4]I simply did not have the courage to question whether the hen *set* or *sat*. After all she was a *setting* hen, and my personal opinion was that too much grammar at that exciting moment would have impaired the story. *Real* writers are *inspired;* grammar is too often just a necessary evil.

left and Brown Sugar went with them. The next morning Boy helped the rooster wake the family and the animals. Boy was very hungry so he started ringing his dinner bell which he did by barking. Soon Nancy came and fed him and got some water for him. The day flew by and soon it was time to go and when it was grandfather gave Nancy a hen and five little chicks. When they got home they made a pen and put them in it, and every time they were hungry Boy told Nancy. And that is the way Boy became a dinner bell.

Boy must have an inside clock because a bell seems to ring when a door shuts. One day when Boy heard the door shut he ran to the car. When he jumped into the back seat he got hair all over Nancy's new dress. "Boy! Boy! You get on the other side" yelled Nancy. Boy said "I goofed this time."[5] That is how Boy gets into trouble and gets into the car too.

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[5]The kids had a hilarious time in class discussion about what a dog thinks when he is scolded for a thoughtless act. Many television stars used such expressions as this one when they made mistakes. This is included not only because it was in the story but also because it showed how the children were learning to draw on their daily experiences for their creative writing needs. Since this was the first time quotation marks were used, we had to review them carefully. On the first draft no one used them correctly, and very few used them correctly on the second and third drafts. Rules were made and entered in our rule book about them.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER III

Tricks

1. Introduction
2. Boy Drives a Car
3. Praying and Walking
4. Boy Sits Up
5. Brown Sugar Stands on His Head
6. Brown Sugar Meets a Circus Dog

TRICKS

Chapter III
Tricks

When the Browns first became owners of Brown Sugar,[1] he didn't know any tricks because he was only a little puppy. Now he knows quite a few. He chases balls and jumps and plays with Nancy. He turns up side down and plays dead. He can jump the rope with Nancy. He likes to show off in front of people. We would like to tell you some of the tricks he will do in the rest of this chapter.

One day Mr. Brown took Boy for a ride in the car. Boy jumped in Mr. Brown's lap. Boy caught hold of the wheel and drove it. Mr. Brown told Mrs. Brown about Boy driving the car. Mr. Brown told Boy that he had taught himself a trick. "But you better not pull it on anybody else," he said.

One weekend when Nancy wasn't doing anything she said, "I know what I will do. I will teach Boy some tricks." First she taught him to say his prayers. Every night he would bow down his head and bark a little. Next she taught him to walk on his hind feet. She did this by holding a piece of meat about three feet in the air and he would walk around on his hind feet because he wanted the meat.

---

[1] I had hesitated to mention the use of a comma following an introductory clause, but, since nearly all of the pupils had learned to combine simple sentences into *when, since,* and *if* sentences, I had, in personal interviews *only,* shown some of them the neat trick of using a comma at a certain point where they stopped long enough to get their breath. All commas after such clauses in this story were placed there by the children. I made no effort to teach this comma usage to the class, however.

Boy knows many tricks but there is one trick I want to tell you about. One day Boy saw Nancy sitting upon her chair. He said to himself,[2] "Why can't I sit in a chair like Nancy?" It sounded to Nancy as if he said, "Bow-wow." "Mother Boy wants something," said Nancy. "He may want to sit up like you," said Mother. "Bend your legs and you will sit down." But Boy fell down. "Isn't there anyway he can sit up?" asked Nancy. Boy kept trying till he learned. "That is a hard way to learn to sit down," said Nancy at last.

One day Nancy told Brown Sugar to stand on his head. Brown Sugar thought to himself, "What does she think I am a clown?" Brown Sugar started to stand on his head but he fell. He tried again and again but he finally did it. That made Brown Sugar very happy.

The Shrine Circus was in town.[3] The children whose mothers couldn't take them to the circus could see it on T.V. Nancy's mother was too busy to take her. So Nancy watched it on T.V. Brown Sugar wanted to see it too so he came in the house so he could see it. It was two hours long. But Brown Sugar sat up all of that time. Brown Sugar saw monkeys, clowns, horses, elephants, and little carts.

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[2]Examination of our readers and library books showed us that, when someone said something, *what was said* was separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma. Twenty-three of the thirty-six members of the class were able to prove this observation by showing me examples which they had found in their readings. We decided it must be a good rule; consequently we adopted it for our own use in writing our book. Every day I was forced to review correct use of quotation marks with much emphasis on the end punctuation within the quotation marks. Some of the children persisted in using a comma with a question mark.

[3]This paragraph and the following one were written entirely by one child. Frequently children asked if they might attempt to write an entire chapter instead of just one paragraph.

But most of all he liked the little dogs especially a little white dog that would run and jump on the little pony and then jump on another.

After the circus was over Nancy went out into the kitchen and left Boy alone. Brown Sugar ran out side and tried to do what the little dog did. First he would chase White Bill around the lot. Next he would try to jump on him but he would fall flat on his face. But then he heard a voice. He turned around and looked. It was the little white circus dog he saw on T.V. He said, "I will take you to the circus with me." "But I can't leave my home," said Boy. "Nonsense! I left mine. I wouldn't be where I am now if I hadn't left home." "Come to this lot tonight and I will tell you if I will go." "O.K. But don't forget." "I won't. Good-by." The little white dog left. That night Brown Sugar left with the dog. There was a reward of $500.00 for the person who found Brown Sugar. The manager didn't know that one of his dogs was worth $500.00. But no one could find Brown Sugar. After a while Brown Sugar got tired of the circus and went back home and never ran away again.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER IV

The Birthday Party

1. Introduction
2. Inviting Guests
3. Making Hats
4. Making the Cake
5. Getting Dressed
6. Arriving at the Party
7. The Uninvited Guest
8. Playing Games
9. Birthday Gifts
10. Serving Refreshments
11. Writing Thank-You Cards

BROWN SUGAR

MRS. BROWN

NANCY

SUSAN

MARY ANN

READY FOR THE PARTY

Chapter IV
The Birthday Party

On Saturday, June 12,[1] Nancy said, "I'd like to have a birthday party for Brown Sugar."

"That is a good idea," said Mother.

"Bow-wow," barked Brown Sugar in approval.[2]

"I think it would be a good idea if we made Brown Sugar a party dress," said Nancy.

"I think it would be fine," said Mother.

"I think I will make him a little blue dress with a black belt," said Nancy. That wasn't very good news for Brown Sugar.

"I don't want to be a little girl. The other dogs will call me sissy," Brown Sugar thought to himself.[3]

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[1] In discussing the first paragraph before we wrote it, I wrote the date of Brown Sugar's birthday on the board and explained the punctuation. Almost without exception the children wrote this date correctly in their first drafts of the paragraph.

[2] The word *approval* was used in our discussion. Many children used it correctly but missed the spelling because they forgot to copy it in their English books when I wrote it on the board during the discussion.

[3] At the close of Chapter III we made a careful check of just how much we had learned about writing. In comparing our book with our readers, one child decided that our book was all "jammed up." The class itself "figured out" what was wrong with our conversation. We should indent every time someone said something. One child wrote all of the conversation in this form, exactly as it appears here. Several others did as well.

Then Mother said, "You will have to invite guests. You could invite the dolls, Mary Ann,[4] the blond, and Susan, the brunette."

"Bow-wow, Bow-wow," said Brown Sugar meaning that would not be a bad idea. You see Boy thought Mary Ann and Susan were very cute. That is how Boy gets along with the girls.

Mrs. Brown said, "You will have to send post cards off." The cards said:[5]

Box 828
Holliday, Texas
June 12

Dear Susan,

You are invited to a birthday party for Brown Sugar Tuesday, June 15, at five o'clock, at my house.

Yours truly,
Nancy Brown

After they had mailed the cards they began thinking about making hats for the birthday party.

---

[4]At first I explained the use of the commas in appositives to the few who had made an effort to divide their writing as indicated. It was not for the entire class. Later, however, I was forced by their own interest and questions to explain these commas to the class.

[5]Since we had other definite class plans for letter and social-note writing, it had not occurred to me to use our book as a medium for teaching such writing until this child actually wrote this invitation within his paragraph. This invitation, of course, then gave birth to the idea of writing thank-you's in the last paragraph of this chapter. I explained to this one child about the use of the colon here.

"Let's see," said[6] Nancy, "we need five hats. One for Mother, one for Susan, one for Mary Ann, one for Brown Sugar, and one for me."

Then Mother suggested, "Hadn't you better get your old Christmas ribbons and things?"

"That's a good idea," shouted Nancy.

First she made one with the bottom of an oatmeal box and a round piece of cardboard.[7] She covered it with yellow paper. She covered the cardboard with doilies on each side which made a brim. Second she made one with flowers off of Mrs. Brown's old hats and put them on some coneshaped construction paper that she had made that was green. Third she made one with a cone shape out of construction paper with red, green, and yellow ribbons on it. Fourth she made one of red, blue, and yellow construction paper that was like a cone. Fifth she

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[6] When we first began writing conversation, each child used the word *said* nearly every time to indicate the manner of speaking. After class discussion of "wearing out" words used too often, the children suggested synonyms to replace *said*. Some synonyms were *replied, answered, exclaimed, shouted, yelled,* and *suggested*. In the next paper these words were used indiscriminately. Consequently we spent the next class period discussing two groups of synonyms for *said*. One group was of *calm* synonyms, such as *replied, answered, asked, added, spoke, suggested, called,* and *remarked*. The other group was of *exciting* synonyms: *exclaimed, shouted, yelled, hollered,* and *screamed*. We decided that the *tone* of the paragraph should be understood chiefly through the correct use of *calm* or *exciting* words. The reader will frequently note a writer's struggle to replace *said* with the correct-sounding synonym.

[7] The first draft of this paragraph on hats was most poorly done, apparently because of lack of effective vocabulary. They rewrote it after we spent much time discussing and writing on the board words they thought they could use best. There were thirty words in their list which accounts for many words in this paragraph not in the usual *written* vocabulary of a fourth grader. We had first spent several days actually making the hats described in our writing. A style show at rest period was our means of selecting the five described.

made one with green construction paper with a purple lantern on the back of it.

When Mother saw the hats she exclaimed, "That is very good!"

Brown Sugar heard her but he did not think much of them.

Mrs. Brown suggested that she could make a big cake for Brown Sugar in her stem pan. She was going to make it out of dog food.

Nancy replied, "Will you put colored icing on it that has Happy Birthday Brown Sugar on it?"

"Yes," exclaimed Mother. "I will make it out of Hearts Delight Dog Food and jello. Jello will make it stick together good."

"I want to eat some cake at the party," shouted Nancy, "and I don't like dog food."

Mrs. Brown yelled, "I will make you some muffins."

This is her recipe:

¾ cup of shortening
1 cup of sugar—mix
1 egg—mix
2 teaspoons of baking powder
½ teaspoon of salt
2 cups of flour
1 teaspoon of vanilla
¾ cup of milk

She mixed the shortening and sugar until it was smooth. She added eggs and

beat it till it was creamy. Then she sifted the baking powder and salt with the flour. She added the milk slowly. Now she added vanilla. She put muffin cups in her muffin pan and poured it in the pan about half full. She turned her oven to 350° and let it cook. After she had cooked everything she put it on the shelf so Mr. Brown and Brown Sugar would not eat it before they were supposed to.[8]

After all the preparations[9] were done they began to get dressed for the birthday party.

"I am going to wear a blue dress with red bows and made of silk," said Mary Ann.

"I am going to wear a pink and yellow nylon dress with ruffles on it," replied Susan.

"I will wear red cotton shorts," suggested Nancy.

"I will wear a green and red sun back dress," said Mother. Mrs. Brown had a wrap around pink dress. It was cotton. You would put it on just like you do a coat and then wrap it around you once and then tie it. But she didn't wear it.[10]

"They may think they are pretty but I am not going to wear any clothes," Boy was thinking.

---

[8]When I asked the child how she knew so well how her mother had baked the muffins, she said, "That's what the cookbook said."

[9]When we tried to think of a word to use that would cover all the plans and work for the party, a child offered this one. No one could spell it, but, after I wrote it on the board, no one misspelled it on his paper. Therefore, the first time they used it, they spelled it correctly.

[10]This description of the pink dress was not part of the paragraph, but another child had written it, and it was too good to omit.

"Here Boy let me put you on some pants and a shirt," suggested Nan y.

"You are not going to put any clothes on me. The other dogs will c ll me a sissy," he thought. He ran around and around. I guess he was trying o catch his tail. After all Boy ended up putting on a pink dress. He nearly blew his top.

"I wish I had put on the pants right away," thought Boy.

Just before the children came skipping to the party Susan wander d away from Mary Ann. When Mary Ann noticed Susan was gone she wen to the policeman. He started to ask the little girl what was the matter but ab ut that time Susan came running up to Mary.

Mary said, "We had better hurry or we will be late."

Susan replied, "We brought Boy a big present."

Mary added, "Happy Birthday Boy."

Nancy added, "I am glad you could come."

Mother called, "Come Susan, Mary Ann, and Nancy. The party is bout to start."

Just as the guests were seated along came the Smith's black and w ite cat. His back was arched. He bared his paws on the ground. His tail fluffed p. And it was as stiff as a board. He trembled up his nose. His eyes were large.

The cat shouted, "Well I would like you to know I like parties too!"

Boy barked, "Oh me she will eat my cake."

Mother called 333 and said, "Mr. Smith your cat is over here picking fight."

Mr. Smith answered, "I'll be over right away."

The cat answered, "So you called my master did you? I'll show you a thing or two."

Boy replied, "Not while I'm here you won't."

Mother answered, "Listen here Mittens I'll take a switch off that tree."

Mr. Smith answered, "You were a bad cat to come to Brown Sugar's birthday party without being invited."

Boy answered, "I didn't care if she came but who wants to have his cake eaten up?"

Mother replied, "Mittens next time you will get invited if you promise you will not pick a fight again."

Mittens asked, "May I bring a present too?"

Nancy, Mother, Brown Sugar, Susan, and Mary Ann all began to play games. First they began to play Throw the Ball. Nancy would throw the ball and Brown Sugar would go get it and bring it back. After while Nancy said, "I'm tired of this game. Let's play another one."

"O.K. We will play Drop the Handkerchief," said Mother.

"That will be fun," said Nancy.

First Mrs. Brown got a handkerchief. Then everyone caught hands. Nancy dropped the handkerchief behind Mother. Brown Sugar got the handkerchief and ran. Mrs. Brown and Nancy chased Brown Sugar around and around the house. By the time they caught him the handkerchief was torn to pieces.

"Let's quit playing games and eat," exclaimed Nancy excitedly.[11]

"No let's look at the gifts first," said Mother.

When they had all the packages stacked around Brown Sugar he joyfully started opening them. When he opened the first one he found a rubber bone.

"That looks delicious," said Brown Sugar. He tried to eat it but it bent in the middle. He kept trying but it wasn't any use so he finally got tired trying and didn't try any more. He thanked Susan for the bone and started opening Mary Ann's. He found a rubber cat. If you would squeeze a ball that was hooked on to the cat it would jump. Brown Sugar happily played with it.

Then he said gaily, "Thank you Mary Ann."

Third he found a rubber ball. It had a card on it and it said, "Happy Birthday to a one year old dog." It had Nancy's name at the bottom.

Then he said excitedly, "Thank you Nancy." He wondered where his other present was. Mrs. Brown took Brown Sugar out into the yard. Brown Sugar found a dog house. It had Brown Sugar on the front. She had the house built so that Boy could sleep in it at night because a few days ago Mrs. Brown had picked fleas off of her and Mr. Brown had asked laughingly, "Is that where you are getting your fleas Boy?"

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[11] When the children discovered that *how* words added much to *said* and its synonyms, I listed on the board all the *how* words the children could remember having heard or read. The following is their list: *joyfully, happily, excitedly, gaily, kindly, angrily, sadly, wonderfully, cheerfully, dreadfully, clearly, hatefully, lovingly, tearfully, rudely, roughly,* and *slowly*. Each child then entered this list in his personal English book for future reference. The reader will note in the following paragraphs positive efforts of the children to use these words.

Brown Sugar jumped in the dog house. But he jumped right back out quickly. Nancy looked in it and found Mittens in it. They put Mittens in the old dog house and Brown Sugar got in his.

Nancy put the ribbons and paper in the trash. Mrs. Brown lit the candles. Then Mary Ann, Susan, Nancy, and Mother sang:

"Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday Brown Sugar,
Happy birthday to you."

Then Brown Sugar made a wish. It was for a birthday at least twice a year because he was having so much fun. After he had made his wish he blew out the candles. Mrs. Brown took the candles out of the cake and cut a piece of cake for Brown Sugar. Nancy, Mary Ann, Susan, and Mother had a cup cake and some punch. Brown Sugar gobbled his piece and jumped upon the table for more. He licked his tongue. Nancy looked at Boy. He had no manners at all.

Boy thought, "It is the only way I can eat you silly thing you." Nancy thought it looked awful.

"Oh my!" said Mrs. Brown.

"Oh me!" said Nancy.

The pitcher of punch upset and Brown Sugar had red punch all over his pretty crepe dress. The crepe paper faded. The red punch trickled down Brown Sugar's ears and he was a red and yellow puppy instead of brown.

"You messy dog," said Nancy, "now you must have a birthday bath." Then it was time to go.

Mary said, "Susan and I had a nice time."

"Are you going to write thank-you[12] cards?" Mother asked Brown Sugar.

"Bow-wow," answered Brown Sugar meaning, *"Me* write cards?"[13]

"Oh, you can't write can you? I guess Nancy will write it," answered Mother. Brown Sugar told Nancy what to write. This is what they wrote:

Box 828
Holliday, Texas
June 16

Dear Susan,

Thank you for the rubber bone. It is just what I wanted. It isn't the color I wanted but it suits me fine.

Yours truly,
Brown Sugar

They wrote this one to Susan as you can see. Then they wrote to Mary Ann and Mother.

---

[12] Since the title of this paragraph was "Thank-You Cards," I explained fully why we use a hyphen between the two words. The majority of the children used it correctly in the title as well as in the paragraph. However, I had no further plans for checking or mentioning this usage except perhaps on the papers of the more advanced pupils when and if the need arose.

[13] This construction was discussed casually but it did not reach the stage of making a rule about it. The children just *knew* it wasn't right because no fourth grader would say *"Me writes* cards." That is baby talk.

Then Brown Sugar said, "I guess you will have to write one to yourself."

Nancy slowly said, "My hand hurts. Why don't you just tell me here and now?"

So Brown Sugar said to Nancy, "Bow-wow-wow-wow," meaning, "I appreciate what you gave to me."

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER V[1]

An African Hunting Trip

1. Talking about a Vacation
2. Writing a Letter
3. Receiving an Answer
4. Working the Arithmetic
5. Being on the Quiz Show
6. A Day in the Congo Region
7. Going Hunting
8. The Elephant Hunt

[1] When we reached this chapter, we were not all using the same wording in our paragraph titles. Three other titles for the first paragraph were: A Month's Vacation, Going Hunting, and Talking about Hunting.

BROWN SUGAR SAID, "SEE WHAT I KILLED!"

Chapter V

An African Hunting Trip[2]

One afternoon Mr. Brown came in the house.

"It's time for my month's vacation," he said happily.

"Where are we going?" asked Nancy.

"I think it will be nice to go to Washington, D. C.," said Mother cheerfully.

"No I want to go to New York. After all it is my vacation," answered Father.

"Daddy,[3] wouldn't it be wonderful if we could go to Africa?" suggested Nancy thoughtfully.

"Oh no," said Mother, "it would cost too much money."

"We are studying the Congo region in geography and I would learn a lot," added Nancy joyfully.

"It would be nice but we don't have enough money," remarked Mother.

"Can we? Can we?" asked Nancy excitedly.

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[2]The class had planned from the very first to take Boy on a make-believe hunting trip. Consequently we decided to do just that in our fifth chapter. Believing *intensely* that the study of geography is the perfect vehicle for creative writing, I carefully wondered aloud to the children one day if they thought we could plan an African hunting trip since we were studying the Congo region in geography anyway. The idea was a veritable gold mine for planning creative writing from both fact and fiction, as the reader will note in the following pages.

[3]A child "discovered" and then proved by ten examples from her reader that a comma is used to set off the name of a person spoken to from the rest of the sentence. After that every child in the class, except two new pupils, found the required evidence, and the rule was added to our growing list.

"Why yes I think it would be fun," said Father, "and I think we have saved enough money. How much will it cost us to go by airplane?"

"We can go as soon as we get some information," answered Mother gracefully.

"I know where we can get the information," shouted Nancy. "I can write to International Airways in Wichita Falls."

"That will be fine," said Father.

Nancy wrote this letter:[4]

Box 828
Holliday, Texas
Nov. 10

Dear Sir,

I am writing to ask you some things about an airplane trip. We want to know the schedule of the airplane from Wichita Falls to the airport nearest the Congo region in Africa. We want to know how much the rates of round trip tickets for Mr. and Mrs. Brown and Nancy will be. May we take about a fourteen pound dog named Brown Sugar along? How much baggage can we take? Is there anything else we need to know about the trip? We would appreciate hearing from you soon so that we can go.

Yours truly,
Nancy Brown

[4]The letter actually mailed is somewhat different from the one given here as Nancy's. I also wrote a letter to the airlines office explaining our project, but the children did not know it.

One morning Nancy had asked if she could go get the mail. Mrs. Brown said she could. About ten minutes later Mrs. Brown saw Nancy coming up the sidewalk as fast as she could. Mrs. Brown heard her shouting, "The letter has come! The letter has come!"

Mr. Brown heard her too. He ran into the living room. "What's going on here?" he asked.

"Nancy got a letter," replied Mother.

"Who from?"[5] asked Father.

"I don't know," answered Mother.

When Nancy reached the house Mr. and Mrs. Brown asked, "Who is the letter from?"

"The letter is from Mr. Stahler," spoke Nancy.

"Who's Mr. Stahler?" whispered Father.

"Mr. Stahler works at Braniff International Airways. He is the district sales manager," explained Nancy.

"Oh," replied Mother.

"How much will it cost to go on the trip to Africa?" asked Father.

"I'm afraid it will cost too much," answered Nancy sadly.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown looked at the letter and then they replied, "I guess we will have to go just to New York."

---

[5] With no apologies to the formal grammarian, I completely, and perhaps gleefully, ignored the use of *who* for *whom*. I set my sights no higher than informal usage in the fourth grade.

"I know what we can do. Let's use our tickets on the Herb Shriner quiz show, Two for the Money," suggested Nancy happily, "and maybe we can win enough to pay our way to Africa."[6]

"That will be a grand idea," said Father.

"Let's figure out how much it will cost us," said Mother for fun. "If my ticket costs $1310.09 how much will mine and Daddy's cost together, Nancy?"

"Two times $1310.09 is $2620.18," answered Nancy after figuring a few minutes.

"If Boy weighs 14 pounds and it is $3.00 a pound, how much will that be?" asked Father.

"It will be 14 times $3.00," said Nancy, "and that is $42.00."

"If Boy's carrying case weighs 25 pounds how much will that be?" asked Mother.

"It will be 25 times $3.00 and that is $75.00," said Nancy.

"Nancy, how much will it all cost?" Father asked.

Nancy said, "For you and Mother it will be $2620.18. For me it will be $655.05. Brown Sugar will cost $42.00 and his cage will cost $75.00. $3392.23 is how much it will cost to go to Africa."

---

[6]We spent an entire class period discussing possibilities for getting enough money for plane tickets. The three means suggested by the class were inheriting it, finding it, and winning it. Since nearly all the children have television sets, the one chosen, of course, was logical. The Herb Shriner show was chosen because the children liked Herb, and also because there seemed no limit to the amount of money to be won, and we had planned early for Nancy and Mr. Brown to win enough money for the trip.

"Nancy," said Father, "how did you add that so quick in your mind?"

"I didn't," said Nancy, "I worked it on a piece of paper."[7]

Now Nancy and Mr. Brown are being introduced to Herb Shriner.

"Now how much money do you want to win tonight?" asked Herb.

"About $5000.00 and if we win it we will go to Africa at 1:30 tomorrow afternoon," replied Nancy. "Daddy has his gun ready to go if we win enough."

"Dr. Gross, tell this couple how to play Two for the Money," said Herb.

"First you try to answer as many questions as you can. If you call one wrong I will buzz this," said Dr. Gross holding up his buzzer.

"The first one is for $5.00," added Herb. "Now name as many things as you can that African people use for food."

Nancy and her daddy answered quickly, "Manioc, corn, beans, peanuts, dates, mangoes, bananas, pineapple, sweet potatoes, crocodile eggs, coconuts, fish, nuts, honey, and elephant meat."

Herb said, "At the rate you're going I bet Mr. Brown will need his gun. You got 15 correct answers so the next time each answer will be $75.00. When the bell rings name as many animals as you can from Africa."

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[7] The sentences concerning arithmetic were gleaned from several different pupils' papers. When the letter containing the figures came, not one child could begin to figure how much it would cost to buy the tickets. Consequently we spent much time for two or three days discussing the arithmetic itself. I wrote ten simple arithmetic problems with suggestions from the pupils who copied them in their English rule books. Before we left the arithmetic, many of them understood the practical relationship between it and their other school work. The problems are listed on page 81.

Nancy and her daddy said, "Horse, elephant, monkey, crocodile, camel, hippopotamus, giraffe, antelope, leopard, buffalo, pigs, baboons, donkey."

"Let's slow down! You got 13 correct answers this time so next time each answer will be $975.00. When the bell rings name as many things as you can that the African people trade."

They answered fast, "Cloth, elephant tusks, animal skins, beans, coconut."

Then the Old Gold scoreboard went up, up, up, to $4,875.00.

"You have just won the Old Gold Cigarette Company," Herb said laughingly.

The next morning at seven o'clock Nancy said, "In six more hours we will leave for Africa." That evening they boarded the plane and left for Africa.[8]

The Browns were now in the Congo Region.[9]

"Let's go the rest of the way by boat down the Congo River," suggested Father.

"No we can't, Father," said Nancy.

"Why can't we, Nancy?" asked Father.

"But, Daddy," answered Nancy, "The Congo is a turbulent river."

"A turbulent river!" exclaimed Mr. Brown.

"Because there are rapids, Father, and they will tear up the boat."

---

[8]All the children, of course, wrote a paragraph about the quiz show, but three papers were so much better than the others that the three were read to the class. All children made suggestions for improving these papers, and then the three children rewrote them. Only what was repetitious was deleted, and the three papers were added to our book.

[9]The following account of a day in the Congo is the work of several children.

"We can go up it a little ways can't we, Nancy?" spoke Mother kindly.

"Yes we can go a little way and then get a train," said Nancy gaily.

"O.K., let's do," replied Father.

"The jungle is so thick you can't drive a car through it," said Nancy. "It isn't as thick as the Amazon jungle because it doesn't rain as much here."

"Is there a delta at the mouth of the Congo River, Nancy?" asked Father.

"No, Daddy, there isn't because the water goes so fast it has not got a chance to drop any sand," replied Nancy.

"Oh, it is hot here isn't it?" said Mother.

"Yes, that is because the sun shines right over our heads," said Nancy.

"The Congo River goes over the equator doesn't it, Nancy?" said Father.

"Yes, and that is partly what makes it so hot, Father," said Nancy happily.

"These trains are very uncomfortable aren't they?" said Mother politely.

"Yes that is because they are wooden," said Nancy.

Brown Sugar was sitting in a seat in the train. The smoke was getting in his eyes and everytime the train turned Brown Sugar fell off the seat into the floor. He was glad to get off when the train stopped.

When they got off the train Mr. Brown saw chocolate-colored bodies. They were pigmies.

Father said, "Nancy, why did you bring salt?"

Nancy said, "So I could make friends with the pigmies. See that beautiful cloth in that woman's hands?"

"What kind is it?" asked Father.

"It is bark cloth," answered Nancy.

"What kind of trees are these?" asked Mother.

"They are Mongongo trees," answered Nancy.

"What are Mongongo leaves used for, Nancy?" asked Father.

"Mongongo leaves are used for shingles, plates, and wrapping paper," answered Nancy.

Mother found some honey in a tree and said, "I wish I could take some of this back to camp."

"We can," said Nancy, "we'll just wrap it in Mongongo leaves. They are as good as jars."

"What are those pigmies eating?" asked Father.

"Manioc bread," said Nancy. "They make their bread out of a plant called manioc. It looks like a sweet potato. They use the poisoned juice of the manioc to put on their arrow tips too."

"Father," replied Nancy gaily, "we are invited to go with the pigmies on their hunt."

"Good,[10] we can learn a lot about their hunts," said Father happily.

"I will tie Brown Sugar and take him too," answered Nancy excitedly.

---

[10] When the children began to notice commas after words for which they knew no particular reason, they began showing them to me. After nearly two weeks of toying with the idea, one child came up with this rule: "Everytime you use a word like *yes, no, now, oh, well,* and *indeed* at the starting of a sentence you use a comma." She gave me ten examples of such comma usages from her reading. When I wrote it on the board and asked if

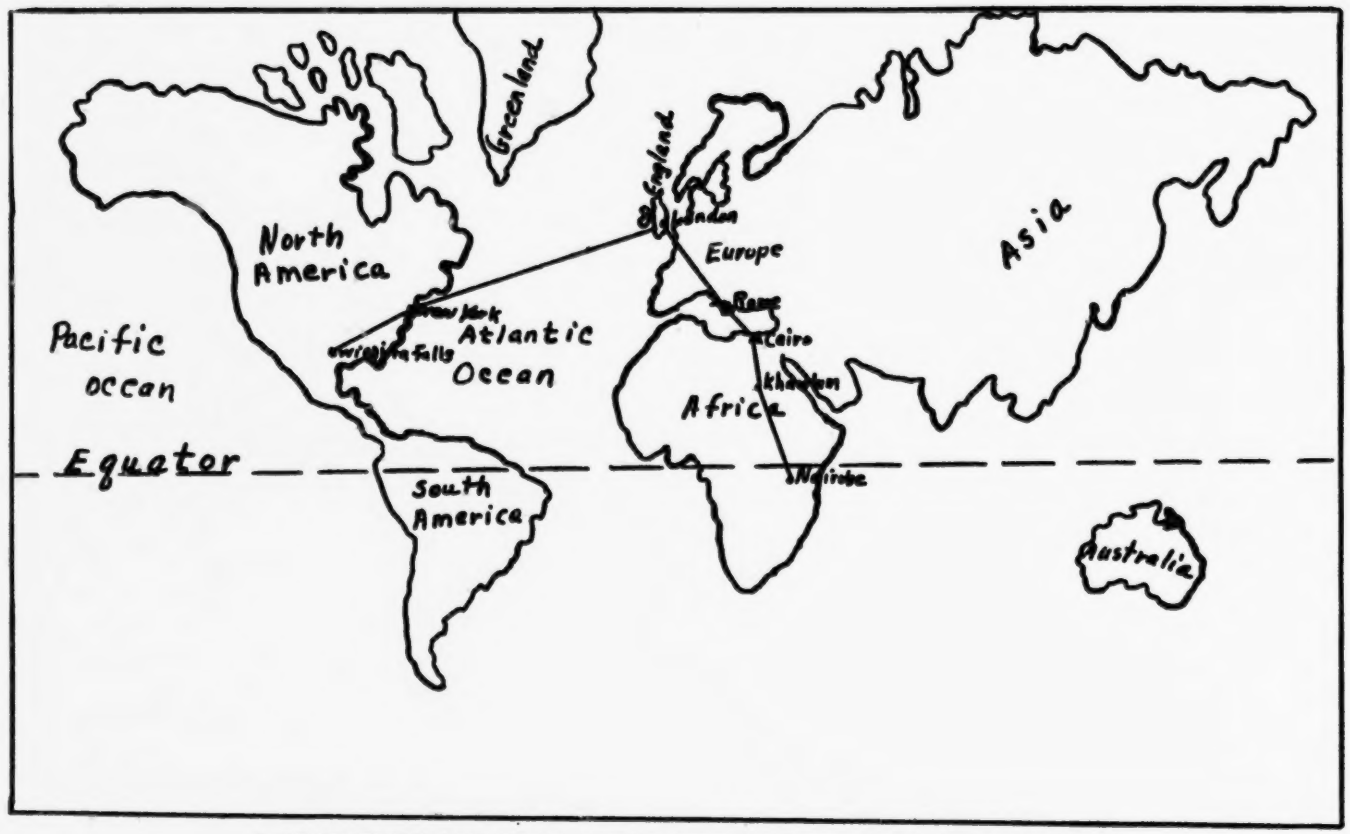
"When are they going?" asked Father.
"They are getting ready now," answered Nancy nicely.
"Go get Mother and we will be ready to go," spoke Father cheerfully.
"O.K.," answered Nancy politely.

The pigmies carry nets. The women carry most of the equipment.[11] They carry their babies on their backs and other things in their hands like nets, bows and arrows, spears, and other things for the men to use. The leader told all the men to tie their nets up. They were now in a little thicket where there was often antelope. The men got their nets ready and the women ran out to scare all the animals. They kicked up a storm and chased the animals into the nets.[12] Soon a gray boloki antelope came and got caught in the nets. The pigmies stabbed the antelope and carried it behind the bushes with them. Then they got ready for some more. The women were chasing a herd of wild pigs. The Browns didn't know it but Brown Sugar was in the herd. Brown Sugar ran into the net.

anybody could improve on it, one child, after rereading our other rules, said "—to separate it from the rest of the sentence." Then the entire class approved it and entered it in their list of rules. Following this the majority of the pupils continued to "prove" the rule by showing me examples in their readers.

[11]This child had used *it* for *equipment* in her first draft. In a personal conference I could not lead her to recall a single word for which *it* stood. When I turned the problem over to the class for consideration, there were some lively suggestions, but none seemed to fit into her sentence. After two or three minutes one child came up with the word *equipment*. Therefore we discussed *hunting equipment, fishing equipment, camping equipment* and similar combinations until it was unanimously agreed that *equipment* was the word needed. I did not mention nouns and pronouns, but I did emphasize the fact that a good writer never leaves his reader in doubt about what the writer actually means. A rule was eventually made. See page 79, rule 20.

[12]I had read parts of "Madami," *Reader's Digest*, October 1954, to the class. It is an account of a pigmy hunt. The children learned much about their geography from this article.



A MAP SHOWING THE AIR ROUTE TO THE CONGO REGION*
INFORMATION IS FROM BRANIFF INTERNATIONAL AIRWAYS
AND IS USED WITH THEIR PERMISSION

***Each child was given a copy of this map to trace the route.**

"Stop! Don't hit. That is my dog," cried Nancy. When the man let Boy out he let out the pigs too.

Boy ran to Nancy and said, "I tried to help."

Nancy answered, "You helped a lot."

Soon a 300-pound cow buffalo[13] came out and ran into the net. They stabbed him and carried him back behind the bushes.

"Oh, boy," said Nancy gleefully.

Boy thought that Nancy had called him. So he came up to her and replied, "What do you want?"

"I don't want anything," answered Nancy.

They kept catching animals until they had five antelopes and two buffaloes. When they all got back to camp the Browns went to wash their faces and when they got back the pigmies gave them a piece of buffalo steak for supper on a Mongongo leaf with a board under it and it was very good. Boy got his share of the meat.

He barked, "Thank you, Nancy, dear."

One morning Mr. and Mrs. Brown, Nancy, and Boy were going hunting with the pigmies on an elephant hunt. Now they were on their way with the pigmies.

---

[13]When I read "Madami," I copied this phrase, "300-pound cow buffalo," on the board as it appeared in the story, and the children copied it in their notes for future use. Of all who then used it in their paragraphs not one misused it. I did not discuss the rule or reason for such phraseology, but a few remembered *thank-you* cards. I merely hoped that by using this again the children would notice more carefully such expressions in their reading and ultimately use them in all their writing.

Two of the pigmies went up on a hill to see if they could see an elephant. The pigmies told the Browns that the elephants were close by.

One pigmy said, "You can not see the elephants because they are nearly the same color of the grass and they stand in the shadows of the trees. I will tell you some more about the elephant. The elephant is the largest of all living land mammals.[14] Most full grown bulls may attain a weight of four or five tons and a height of 10 feet or more at the shoulder."

Boy added, "You mean most full grown elephants weigh four or five tons?"

"Yes, and a height of 10 feet or more at the shoulder," Nancy answered. "Two tusks, a pair, from a large bull may weigh 300 pounds and be 11 feet long."

The pigmy replied, "I will tell you something more about an elephant. He is hard to shoot because his skull is 15 inches thick. You will not need a gun because the noise makes an elephant furious. If you scare them they had just as soon kill the one who scared them."

Nancy said, "I will be very quiet."

Father said, "Why did I bring a gun?"

---

[14] This child read widely strictly on her own when we were discussing and planning this paragraph. Consequently I accepted her "bookish-sounding" sentences without question because I encourage pupils to learn from "real" authors.

As a class project, we borrowed all reference books about elephants from the library and read in groups. A good reader was assigned to each group of four or five pupils (according to the number of books we had). When all groups had finished, I wrote on the board all facts that the children had gleaned from their reading and listening. This compiled information was used by all the class members. They willingly used a recess period for this work.

The pigmy said, "I can take a spear and kill one." While they were walking along the leader told them that an elephant's trunk is from 6 to 8 feet long. His trunk has 40 thousand muscles in it. The elephant's eye sight is poor but he can smell danger. He told them that elephants live to be a hundred years old. Then a pigmy came and told them that he saw an elephant down a way. They all began to get quiet. Mr. Brown had a muzzle on Boy so he wouldn't scare the elephants and he had a leash on Boy so he wouldn't get away. Soon they saw a 10,000-pound bull elephant.[15] One of the pigmies slipped around and got under the elephant. He stuck a spear in his stomach.[16] When everything was all right with the elephant dead Boy broke away from the leash and ran upon the elephant. He acted like he had killed the elephant himself.

Boy said, "See what I killed!"

---

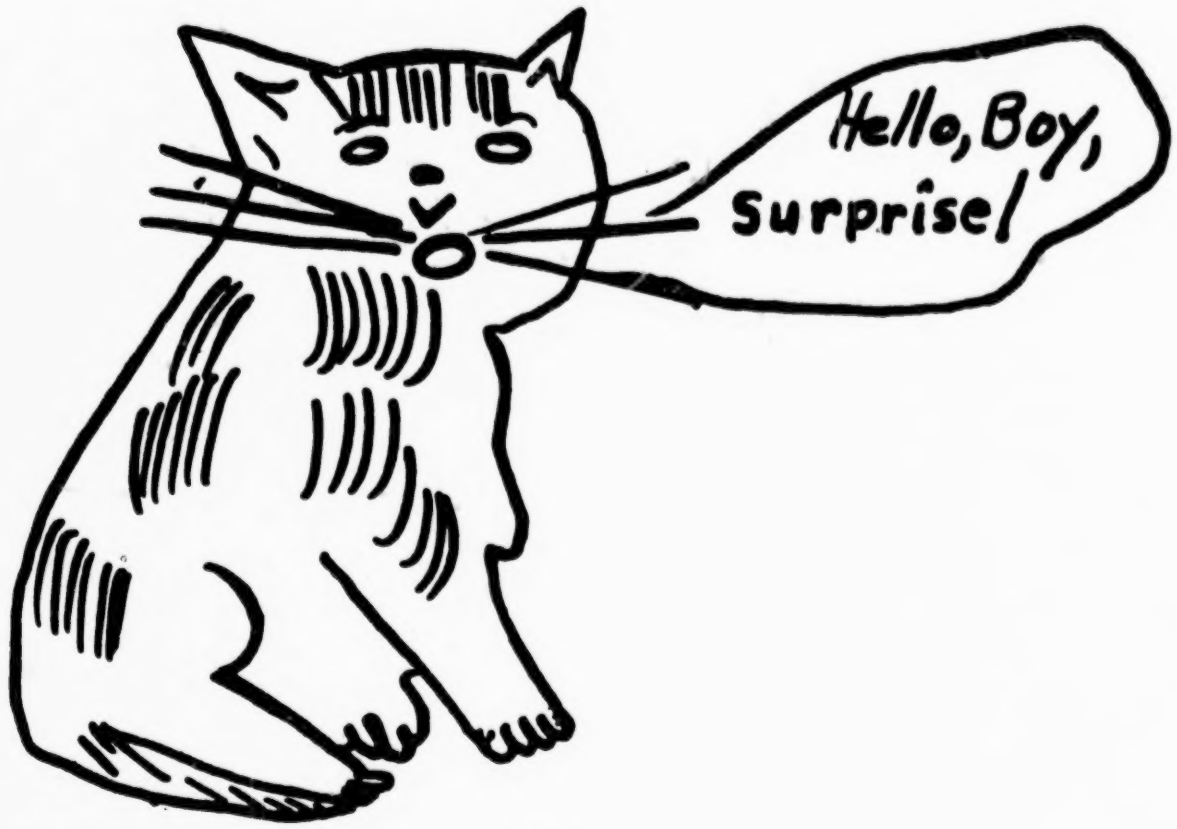
[15] This terminology was the result of combining more arithmetic with our writing. Since no one knew how many pounds were in a ton, we checked a table in our arithmetic book to determine the actual weight of a 5-ton elephant.

[16] This is what actually happened in "Madami," and the kids thought it more thrilling than killing with a gun.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER VI

The Conclusion

1. Coming Home or Leaving Africa
2. Meeting the Reporters
3. Arriving Home
4. The Surprise Party
5. Writing a Book
6. Writing a Poem


Hello, Boy,
Surprise!

Chapter VI
The Conclusion

After the elephant hunt had died down it was time to go home.

"Well," said Mother, "tomorrow is the last day of our vacation. Guess we should go around and tell our pygmy[1] friends good-by."

Tears began to come out of Nancy's eyes and she asked, "Oh, do we have to go?"

"Yes, I'm sorry but we will have to go home," remarked Father slowly. "I will go and tell the pigmies good-by."

Boy replied, "May I go with you?"

Nancy replied, "Let's all go."

Mother replied, "That is a good idea." On the way Boy went so fast he fell right in front of his monkey friend. Brown Sugar wagged his tail. The monkey saw it and away they went. Boy said he hoped he had a tail left. The pigmies gave Boy some little leopard skins to take home. The leader gave Mr. Brown a spear to remember him by. They gave Nancy and Mother some ivory jewelry and trinkets made from elephant tusks. The monkey didn't like Boy so he gave him a conk on his head.

[1] Since *pigmy* was the spelling used in our geography textbook, I tried at first to teach this spelling for our writing; but the children read from so many reference books, some of which used one spelling while others used another, that I finally gave up in order to devote more time to the consistent use of the plural form of the word.

Boy said, "I will never come to Africa again."

Then[2] the man that had the zoo came and in his hands was a little baby leopard and he said, "Nancy, I am going to give this baby leopard to you because you would make a very, very good mother for it and it has no mother because she died right after it was born."

"But I have no cage to take it in," said Nancy, "and I can't take the baby elephant and the baby leopard both."

"Then," said Father, "You will have to leave one."

"I'll leave the elephant," said Nancy. After they had made a cage for the little leopard they packed their things. They quickly got on the plane and they called good-by and they were on their way home at last. In about 22[3] hours they landed on the landing field in Wichita Falls.

When the Browns got off the plane there were flash bulbs flashing all around. Boy ran back into the plane. The photographers went in after him and took his picture.

"Are you Mr. and Mrs. Brown and Nancy and Brown Sugar?" asked a reporter clearly.

"Yes, that is us.[4] What do you want?" asked Father kindly.

---

[2]Sometimes the children wrote such good paragraphs that several times throughout this book I have used more than one paragraph on the same subject. This begins one of those extra paragraphs about "Going Home."

[3]The time they gave for the return trip was from two hours to two days. This is used simply because it was in this paragraph.

[4]Since I am convinced that *us* in object territory here is of minor importance in the fourth grade, I did

"I am a reporter from the newspaper. I heard about your trip to Africa and I would like to know about it," replied the reporter happily.

"We killed elephants, wild pigs, wild buffaloes, and wild antelopes," replied Father.

Just then a cameraman mashed a rubber ball and the flash made Brown Sugar blink his eyes and bark, "Bow-wow."

"Oh, Boy," said Nancy, "we will have our pictures in the newspaper."

"Bow-wow," said Brown Sugar, "I hope all my friends look at the newspaper." After they had got a story and some pictures the photographers and reporters escorted[5] them to the car. When the Browns got home, there was a lot of cars over at the Smith's[6] house.

Nancy asked, "Reckon why all the cars are over at the Smith's?"

"I really don't care," added Father.

"Maybe they are having a forty-two party," Boy said sleepily.

Then they started into their house. As they opened the door and turned on the lights their neighbors jumped out from behind their divan, chairs, curtains,

---

not in any manner call the attention of the class to this violation of the "rule book." In this book I have merely capitalized on the opportunity to smooth the ruggedness out of the speech and composition of *fourth graders.* Linking verbs and predicate nominatives are completely beyond my scope at this level.

[5]The word *escorted* was not used in class discussion, but the child who used it asked me how to spell it as she was writing her paragraph.

[6]Even though there were times that the children used the plural possessive, I never did clutter up their thinking with a rule about it. They had had too much trouble with apostrophes anyway.

desk, T.V., and the rest of the furniture and cried, "Welcome!" Almost the whole town was in that one room.

They all said, "Tell us about your trip."

Nancy was the one who was going to tell the story. Nancy was in the middle of the story when Boy started telling it. Nancy was mad. Boy kept on talking. Then Nancy took over. Nancy finished the story. Everyone was asking her about Africa. Nancy thought she was popular. Boy was very stuckup. Just then someone asked, "Where are[7] Mary Ann and Susan?"

"Oh, my, I forgot to take Mary Ann and Susan out of my bag," said Nancy as she ran to her bags and took out Mary Ann and Susan.

Susan moaned, "I am so mad. Just look at me. My dress is all wrinkled."

"Look at me. I look like a grab bag or a witch," cried Mary Ann.

"Oh, no, you don't. You look like a baboon," laughed Susan.

"Well, I would hate to say what you look like," scolded Mary Ann.

"Now, now," laughed Nancy, "calm down." Right then Mittens came in.

Boy said, "If he doesn't leave I will."

Nancy said, "Boy, don't say things like that to him. It is not like you."

Boy answered, "Well, I guess I have been mean and just to show you I am nice I am going to give you a leopard skin for a bed."

---

[7]Since nearly every child who asked this or a similar question used *is*, we devoted an entire class period to the discussion and drill on agreement of subject and predicate. However, I did not use formal grammatical terminology.

"Thank you very much," said Mittens.

"We brought you all some souvenirs back," said Mrs. Brown.

Then Mrs. Smith served. The women had already fixed some punch for the children. The coffee pot was fixing the coffee for the men. The women were going to drink cokes. Then the company had to leave and the Browns went to bed.

A few days after that Brown Sugar asked, "Nancy, you haven't been bringing your English book home. Why?"

"Because I have been writing a book about you," answered Nancy.

"Why did you and your class write a book about little old me?" barked Boy.

"It was fun. We didn't have to have English. We learned something, too."

"Well, you mean I'm an English teacher now?" said Brown Sugar.

"Yes, you are," said Nancy, "and, oh, I am so proud of you. I didn't have to work in my English book and I learned a lot more than if I had studied it. I learned to use synonyms.

"What are synonyms?" asked Brown Sugar.

"They are words that mean about the same thing," said Nancy. "Some calm synonyms for said are: *replied, asked, added, answered, suggested, called, apologized, remarked, barked, growled, pouted,* and *spoke.* Some exciting synonyms for *said* are: *exclaimed, cried, shouted, yelled, hollered* and *screamed.*"

"Tell me what else you have learned, Nancy," said Brown Sugar.

"Well, I learned that sometimes we have to change letters to make the word

mean more than one. Then to make two words into one we use an apostrophe to show for the missing letters. Then I learned to show ownership. We usually use an apostrophe and *s*. I learned every time we use the words like *yes, no, now, oh, well* and *indeed* at the starting of a sentence, we use a comma to separate it from the rest of the sentence. To make a word mean more than one we usually add an -s. Sometimes we have to add -es."

"Boy! You sure learned a lot just writing a book," replied Brown Sugar.

"I know but that isn't all. These are some more things that I learned: Every telling sentence, abbreviations, initials, and numbers in a column should be followed by a period. A comma is used to separate what is said from the person who said it. Commas are used to separate words in a list. A comma is used between a city and a state. A comma is used to separate the day of the month from the year. Use commas after explaining words. Commas should be used after the greeting and closing of letters. A comma is used to set off the name of a person spoken to."

"That's enough!" cried Brown Sugar.

"Besides that," said Nancy, "I learned 62 new words. We used up our time for geography and did English so we wrote about Africa and I learned more. We even worked arithmetic in English."

"Well, you have learned quite a lot," said Boy.

Nancy was so proud of Brown Sugar when the book was finished that she

wrote a poem about him. She took her poem to school and their music class made up the music. This was the song:

My Pup[8]

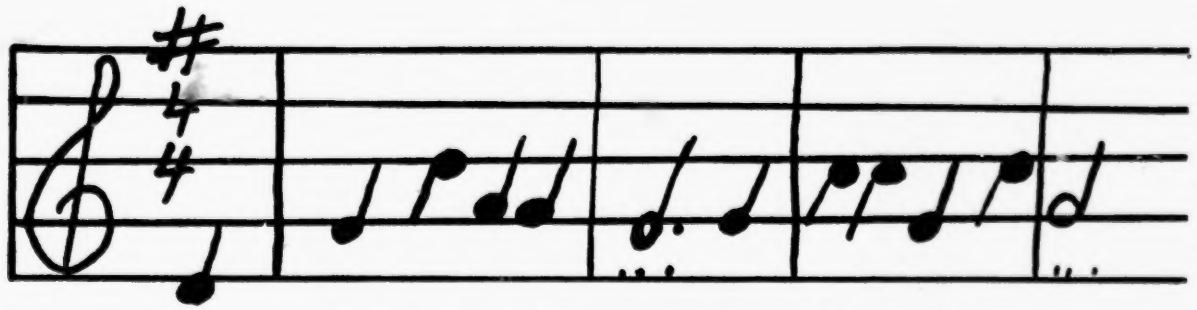
I have a little pup,
He drinks milk from a cup.
He likes to run and catch a ball
And brings it back when you call.

He sleeps a little every day
And he will sit up if you say.
He's brown and blond and very small
And acts so friendly to us all.[9]

[8]Actually this poem was written during the first weeks of our writing, but we never could find a place to work it into the story until we came to the last chapter.

[9]We discussed the use of a capital to begin each line of poetry. We had discussed it previously when writing p. 27 also. The rule was written with the use of this poem.

MY PUP[1]



I have a lit-tle pup, He drinks milk from a cup.
He sleeps a lit-tle every day and he will sit up if you say.

He likes to run and catch a ball and brings it back when you call.
He's brown and blond and very small and acts so friendly to us all.

[1] Music was composed by fourth graders in music class.

My Own English Book

Introduction

This copy of *My Own English Book* is a cross section of the forty individual composition books in which the fourth graders kept the information which they *knew* they needed in their writing or which they thought they *might* need at a later date.

Under "Writing News" are rules which evolved during the actual writing of the book. Though the better students actually "discovered" and proved nearly all the rules, they explained them to the entire class. I then wrote the rules on the board, in the pupil's own words, and gave each child a chance to make the rules stronger by presenting more evidence. This detective work was completely delightful and tremendously rewarding to all of us.

Since the arithmetic teacher required correct spelling in her work, the children kept a list of arithmetic words which I suggested be recorded in the composition books for safekeeping. This practice, of course, aided materially when we wrote paragraphs involving arithmetic terminology. Thus "Arithmetic Spelling Words" became an important contribution to the efforts of my promising young writers.

The "English Spelling Words" list is exactly what the name implies. I believe that children will become reasonably good spellers if they are given few, if any, chances to *misspell* words. Therefore, during the discussion preceding the actual writing of each paragraph, I asked the children to think of words which they

might want to use in their writing. I wrote the words on the board, and all of the children who wanted to use them copied them in their lists. The children were not only allowed but encouraged to refer to these lists during *any* writing which they might do. They eventually learned that a *good, full* list of words would not only help them in their spelling but would also help them to recall ideas on tests. Consequently the lists grew to gratifying proportions.

The "Geography Spelling Words" list evolved and grew just as the words in the English list did. This list, from the children's viewpoint, was perhaps the most practical of all. My unorthodox method of teaching geography gave impetus to the evolution of this list. Only after I was reasonably sure that the class was completely familiar with a certain country, in this case the Congo region, did I ask for a paragraph. Five well-discussed facts about the region constituted an A+ and other grades followed on a definite scale. No holds were barred. Any *true* information was acceptable. To avoid poor spelling (which taxes the English grade on that same geography paragraph), the youngsters soon learned to keep and *to use* this list religiously.

The "Spelling Spelling Words" list is merely the list of words misspelled in the weekly spelling lesson.

"Synonyms" is a short and not-too-exact list of synonyms and *how* words. Though the latter are not really synonyms, they do serve near said-slot-word positions in the sentences. Therefore, we entered them in this list for convenience.

"Usages a Good Writer Should Know" is a cross section list that I compiled from the children's books. Each child kept only his own list. Sometimes, when substandard usages continued to come up in oral class discussions, I explained the necessity for ridding our speech of such "flaws" before they marred our book. Each child was made conscious of his own substandard usages. When a correction did not sound "right," and a child questioned me about it, I challenged him to prove his argument by the speech of any educated person whom he knew or by any reading material. Never did I turn to a textbook for support of my explanation.

Though perhaps this textbook, *My Own English Book,* written by my fourth graders, lacks much, we found that it worked magic for us. As a guide for writing the great novel *The Adventures of Brown Sugar,* it has been perfect. And, perhaps more important than anything else, to us it has *purpose, reason,* and *good sense.*

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Story Ideas

I. Brown Sugar Ideas
   1. Introducing Brown Sugar
   2. The Alarm Clock
   3. Tricks
   4. The Birthday Party
   5. African Hunting Trip
   6. The Conclusion

II. Other Story Ideas
   1. Fluffy and His Mother
   2. The Pony Express
   3. Patsy and Joe (cow and calf)
   4. Tippy Turtle
   5. My Horse Blue
   6. Kathy and Me (a dog's autobiography)
   7. My Teddy Bear's Life
   8. Candle Making
   9. Goofy[1]

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[1]This story is on page 83.

10. Prince, the Lion
11. The Life of My Dog
12. Sam Plays Football
13. That's Why Stories
14. The Cat That Heard a Story
15. Timmy Bear Comes to Life
16. Kathy Lee's Switzerland

WRITING NEWS

I. The Sentence
   1. A sentence is a group of words put together that makes sense.
   2. A sentence should start with a capital.
   3. A telling sentence should end with a period.
   4. Every asking question should end with a question mark.
   5. An exciting sentence should end with a ball and bat.

II. The Period
   1. A telling sentence should end with a period.
   2. Abbreviations should be followed by periods.
   3. Initials should be followed by periods.
   4. Numbers in columns should be followed by periods.

III. Quotation Marks
   1. When somebody talks we put quotation marks in front of and back of what he says.
   2. When we write the name of a story, poem, song, movie, or article we use quotation marks in front of and after it.

IV. The Comma
   1. A comma is used to separate what is said from the person who said it.
   2. Commas are used to separate words in a list. (Three or more make a list.)

3. A comma is used to separate the day of the month from the year.
4. A comma is used between a city and a state.
5. Use a comma before and after explaining words.
6. A comma is used to set off the name of a person spoken to.
7. Commas should be used after the greetings and the closings of letters.
8. Every time you use a word like *yes, no, now, oh, well* and *indeed* at the starting of a sentence you use a comma to separate it from the rest of the sentence.

V. The Apostrophe
1. To make two words into one we use an apostrophe to show for the missing letter or letters.
2. To show ownership we usually use the apostrophe and an *s*.

VI. Making Words Mean More Than One
1. To make a word mean more than one we usually add an *s*. Sometimes we have to add *es*.
2. To make a word mean more than one we sometimes have to change the letters in it. Some words don't change at all.

VII. When we write the name of a book within a paragraph we underline the name of the book.

VIII. Writing a Paragraph
1. We have to indent when we start a paragraph.

2. In a paragraph if a person or an animal says something you have to indent again.
3. A paragraph is a part of a story that tells about one thing. When we start telling about something else we start another paragraph.

IX. Capital Letters

1. All the words in the name of a story or a book or a chapter usually start with capital letters.
2. Special names of people, animals, places, and things should start with capital letters.
3. In writing poetry every line should start with a capital letter.

Arithmetic Spelling Words

1. arithmetic
2. addition
3. sum
4. figures
5. zero
6. numbers
7. place value
8. thought number
9. ones
10. tens
11. hundreds
12. thousands
13. column
14. practice
15. subtract
16. subtracting
17. subtraction
18. remainder
19. difference
20. borrow
21. triangles
22. rectangles
23. borrowing
24. multiply
25. multiplier
26. multiplying
27. multiplicand
28. multiplication
29. divide
30. dividing
31. divisor
32. quotient
33. reverse
34. uneven
35. fraction
36. decimal point
37. example
38. circles
39. squares
40. Roman numbers
41. Arabic numbers
42. vertical
43. horizontal
44. diagonal
45. compare
46. dollars
47. cents
48. fifty
49. forty
50. ninety
51. copying
52. several
53. number
54. processes
55. carrying
56. perimeter
57. distance
58. surface
59. width
60. length
61. around
62. bought

English Spelling Words

1. to (to a place)
2. too (too much) (also)
3. two (two girls)
4. here (a place)
5. hear (with ear)
6. there (a place)
7. their (their books)
8. they're (they are)
9. they
10. party
11. parties
12. through (a window)
13. o'clock
14. threw (a ball)
15. no (no money)
16. know (I know it)
17. again
18. took
19. stood
20. trouble
21. arrive
22. arriving
23. arrived
24. arrival
25. whistle
26. pretty
27. come
28. coming
29. stem
30. hearts
31. shortening
32. supposed
33. oatmeal
34. pedal
35. appreciate
36. cone-shaped
37. finally
38. tried
39. wondered
40. front

41. international
42. are (We are going)
43. or (Nancy or Jane)
44. right (right arm)
45. write (write a letter)
46. information
47. Wichita Falls
48. trouble
49. hunting
50. idea
51. unbuttoned
52. comfortable
53. let's (let us)
54. herb
55. forest
56. ways (pretty ways and always)
57. weighs (in pounds)
58. elephant
59. birth
60. stomach
61. tons
62. skulls
63. teeth
64. inches
65. feet
66. pound
67. tusk
68. isn't (is not)
69. won't (will not)
70. want (to wish for)
71. located
72. story
73. stories
74. tallow
75. candle
76. kettle
77. kitten
78. Fluffy, Sr.
79. Fluffy, Jr.
80. family
81. chocolate
82. napkins
83. guest

84. preparation
85. ancestors
86. relatives
87. hearth
88. equipment
89. pioneer
90. saplings

Geography Spelling Words

1. net
2. bows and arrows
3. spears
4. Mongongo leaves
5. shingles
6. plates
7. wrapping paper
8. honey
9. chocolate-colored baby
10. bark
11. pigmy (pygmy)
12. pigmies
13. boloki antelope
14. okapi, forest giraffe
15. antelope
16. leopard
17. 300-pound buffalo
18. python
19. crocodile
20. wild pigs
21. driver ants
22. horn bills
23. baboon
24. leaf-thatched
25. herd of elephants
26. turbulent river
27. Belgian Congo
28. hippopotamus
29. manioc
30. isthmus
31. Greece
32. Cairo
33. delta
34. Amazon
35. valley
36. scythe
37. tropical climate
38. temperate
39. arctic
40. antarctic

41. France
42. autumn
43. Mediterranean
44. autobiography
45. olives
46. grapes
47. goats
48. sheep
49. dust
50. extremes
51. Athens
52. Europe

Spelling Spelling List[1]

1. market
2. butcher
3. bushes
4. lemons
5. peanuts
6. plenty
7. weather
8. fresh
9. flour
10. surprised
11. these
12. meadow
13. lonesome
14. lying
15. hundred
16. raised
17. prize
18. themselves
19. freeze
20. everything
21. frozen
22. several
23. quick
24. interesting
25. finished
26. subject
27. twice
28. decided
29. plow
30. geography
31. cupboard
32. studied
33. accident
34. ribbons
35. excuse
36. bumped
37. chickens
38. hungry
39. elephant
40. feather
41. since
42. favorite
43. smaller
44. problem
45. change
46. answered
47. sleeves
48. thread
49. history
50. sidewalk
51. sudden
52. education
53. Christmas
54. everywhere
55. machine
56. pleasant
57. dropped

[1]This list is by no means complete. It is merely a cross section of forty such spelling lists.

58. shining
59. beginning
60. breakfast
61. served
62. language

Synonyms

1. said (calm words)	replied, asked, added, answered, suggested, called, apologized, remarked, barked, growled, pouted, promised, spoke, bragged, inquired.
2. said (exciting words)	exclaimed, cried, shouted, yelled, hollered, screamed.
3. pretty	cute, beautiful, handsome, gorgeous, lovely.
4. exciting	interesting, wonderful, delightful, enjoyable, joyous, lovely, playful, happy.
5. how words	joyfully, excitedly, gaily, kindly, angrily, sadly, wonderingly, cheerfully, dreadfully, clearly, hatefully, lovingly, tearfully, slowly, rudely, roughly, happily, clumsily, nicely, graciously, gracefully, politely, hastily, teasingly.

Usages a Good Writer Should Know

I. Word Forms to Remember

	Present Time	*Past Time*	*Past Time With Helpers* (have, has, had, is, are, was, were)
1.	come-comes	came	come
2.	run-runs	ran	run
3.	take-takes	took	taken
4.	weave-weaves	wove	woven
5.	know-knows	knew	known
6.	sleep-sleeps	slept	slept
7.	wake-wakes	waked, woke	waked
8.	give-gives	gave	given
9.	do-does	did	done
10.	choose-chooses	chose	chosen
11.	learn-learns	learned	learned
12.	say-says	said	said
13.	reply-replies	replied	replied
14.	sit-sits	sat	sat
15.	lie-lies	lay	lain
16.	rise-rises	rose	risen

17.	eat-eats	ate	eaten
18.	bite-bites	bit	bit or bitten
19.	catch-catches	caught	caught

II. Correct Ways of Saying and Writing Things

1. Two dogs *were* (not was)
2. He didn't know *any* tricks (not *no* tricks)
3. *Himself* (not hisself)
4. *Themselves* (not theirselves)
5. *Those* or *these* people (not *them* people)
6. John and *I* went (not *me* and John)
7. *Want* means to *wish for.*
8. *Won't* means *will not.*
9. *Doesn't* he know it (not *don't* he)
10. *May* I read this book (not *can* I)
11. *Another* (not *a nother*)
12. *Teach* me the poem (not *learn* me)
13. *Its* shows ownership.
14. *It's* means *it is.*
15. *Your* shows ownership.
16. *You're* means *you are.*
17. *There* means *place.*
18. *Their* shows ownership.

19. *They're* means *they are.*
20. *It* and *they* and other such words should not be used unless the reader knows exactly *who* or *what* is meant.
21. *When, as, since,* and *if* sentences make reading much more interesting.
22. *Because* is not a good beginning for a sentence unless enough is added to make good sense.
23. Too many *ands* spoil good writing.
24. Have to (not *haft* to)

III. Using Describing Words Correctly[1]

1. good-better-best (not *gooder-goodest*)
2. bad-worse-worst (not *badder, worser, worstest*)
3. much-more-most (not *mostest*)
4. beautiful-more beautiful-most beautiful (not *beautifulest*)
5. lovely-lovelier-loveliest (not *more lovelier*)
6. little-less-least (sometimes littlest[2])
7. tall-taller-tallest (not *more taller*)
8. handsome-more handsome-most handsome
9. happily-more happily-most happily

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[1]I do not make a special point of avoiding the terms adjectives and adverbs. I simply had not encountered a practical reason for cluttering up the youngsters' minds this early in their writing experience.

[2]Not only does the title *The Littlest Angel* support our belief here, but we have run across this word several times in our reading also.

10. funny-funnier-funniest
11. politely-more politely-most politely
12. quiet-quieter-quietest
13. gaily-more gaily-most gaily
14. mean-meaner-meanest

Arithmetic in Story Writing

Mr. and Mrs. Brown's airplane tickets will cost $1310.09 each. Nancy's ticket which is half fare will cost $655.05. Brown Sugar and his carrying case will be charged according to weight at the rate of $3.00 per pound. Each person will be allowed to carry 66 pounds of baggage.

1. How much will Mr. and Mrs. Brown's tickets cost?
2. How much will all three of the Browns' tickets cost?
3. Since Brown Sugar weighs 14 pounds, how much will his ticket cost?
4. If Boy's carrying case weighs 25 pounds, how much will it cost to take it?
5. How much will it cost to take Boy in his case?
6. How much will the airplane passage for the whole hunting party cost?
7. How much baggage may all the family take?
8. If Mr. Brown's gun weighs 12 pounds, how much baggage in addition to his gun may he take?
9. If Mary Ann and Susan weigh 2 pounds each, how much baggage in addition to the dolls may Nancy take?
10. The Browns have enough money for their African hunting trip except for their airplane passage. How much will they need to win on a quiz show in order to make the trip? If they win $5,000.00, how much will they have left to spend for sightseeing and souvenirs?

Goofy—An Individual Project[1]

OUTLINE

I. My Dog

1. Describing Goofy
2. Where Goofy Came From
3. Goofy's First Night with Us
4. When It Snowed
5. Goofy's Cold

[1] I cannot resist including the first chapter of this individual book. It represents most of this child's writing in English for the first six weeks period of the second semester. She was amazed to discover when we had completed *Brown Sugar* that she had "caught on" to what we were attempting to do. In the beginning her work had been inferior. It was in the writing of *her own book* that she first realized the full significance of quotation marks. In such efforts as this I found concrete proof of the pudding!

Goofy

Goofy is my dog. Goofy is one foot tall. He weighs 35 pounds. He is black. He has one foot white. He has a long tail and it wags. He looks like a black cat with her tail wagging. He has short legs and when he walks he wobbles. He has blue eyes. He has two long ears.

One day a man came in the place where my mother works.

He said, "Do you want a dog?"

My mother replied, "Yes! I would like to have one." The man gave her a dog. She came in that afternoon.

She said, "I have a surprise for you."

Everybody shouted, "What is it!"

Mother said, "It is a dog." Everybody wanted to hold it.

She said, "You take time about to hold him."

That night I picked up Goofy. He bit me. I put him down and slapped him.

Reba said, "Do not slap him. It hurts. I will put him to bed."

Mother said, "Put a clock in the bed with him."

Lois said, "Why did you put the clock in the bed with him?"

Mother said, "Because the dog thinks it is his mother. Inside of her it is like a clock." So he snuggled up by the clock.

It came a snow one night.

The next morning Mother said, "We can put him in the cellar. He jumped up

and down in the cellar. He wore a hole in the mattress and feathers flew all over the place.

That evening Daddy asked, "Where is Goofy?"

Mother said, "He is in the cellar." So everybody went to the cellar.

Mother said, "Oh, there goes my mattress!"

The day after the snow Goofy got a cold.

Reba said, "What can we do about it?"

Mother said, "I will put vicks on his nose."

So we put vicks on his nose and he licked it off.

He thought, "That tastes good." So he kept licking until he got over the cold.